Enter don Pedro, Iohn the baſtard.

Pedro What ſecret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonatoes?

Bene. I would your Grace would conſtraine me to tell.

Pedro I charge thee on thy allegeance.

Ben. You heare, Count Claudio, I can be ſecret as a dumb man, I woulde haue you thinke ſo (but on my allegiance, marke you this, on my allegiance) he is in loue, with who? now that is your Graces part: marke how ſhort his anſwer is, with Hero Leonatoes ſhort daughter.

Clau. If this were ſo, ſo were it vttred.

Bened. Like the olde tale, my Lord, it is not ſo, nor twas not ſo: but indeede, God forbid it ſhould be ſo.

Claudio If my paſſion change not ſhortly, God forbid it ſhould be otherwiſe.

Pedro Amen, if you loue her, for the Lady is very well worthy.

Claudio You ſpeake this to fetch me in, my Lord.

Pedro By my troth I ſpeake my thought.

Claudio And in faith, my Lord, I ſpoke mine.

Bened. And by my two faiths and troths, my Lorde, I ſpoke mine.

Clau. That I loue her, I feele.

Pedro That ſhe is worthy, I know.

Bened. That I neither feele how ſhe ſhould be loued, nor know how ſhe ſhould be worthie, is the opinion that fire can not melt out of me, I will die in it at the ſtake.

Pedro Thou waſt euer an obſtinate heretique in the deſpight of Beauty.

Clau. And neuer could maintaine his part, but in the force of his wil.

Bene. That a woman conceiued me, I thanke her: that ſhe brought me vp, I likewiſe giue her moſt humble thankes: but that I will haue a rechate winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an inuiſible baldricke, all women ſhall pardon mee: becauſe I will not doe them the wrong to miſtruſt any, I will doe my ſelfe the right to truſt none: and the fine is, (for the which

which I may go the finer,) I will liue a bacheller.

Pedro I ſhall ſee thee ere I die, looke pale with loue.

Bene. With anger, with ſickneſſe, or with hunger, my Lord, not with loue: proue that euer I looſe more blood with loue then I will get againe with drinking, picke out mine eies with a Ballad-makers penne, and hang me vp at the doore of a brothel houſe for the ſigne of blinde Cupid.

Pedro Well, if euer thou doſt fall from this faith, thou wilt prooue a notable argument.

Bene. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a Cat, and ſhoote at me, and he that hits me, let him be clapt on the ſhoulder, and calld Adam.

Pedro Well, as time ſhal trie: in time the ſauage bull doth beare the yoake.

Bene. The ſauage bull may, but if euer the ſenſible Benedicke beare it, plucke off the bulls hornes, and ſet them in my forehead, and let me be vildly painted, and in ſuch great letters as they write, here is good horſe to hyre: let them ſignifie vnder my ſigne, here you may ſee Benedicke the married man.

Claudio If this ſhould euer happen, thou wouldſt be horne madde.

Pedro Nay, if Cupid haue not ſpent all his quiuer in Venice, thou wilt quake for this ſhortly.

Bened. I looke for an earthquake too then.

Pedro Well, you will temporize with the howres, in the meane time, good ſignior Benedicke, repaire to Leonatoes, commend me to him, and tell him I will not faile him at ſupper, for indeede he hath made great preparation.

Bened. I haue almoſt matter enough in mee for ſuche an Embaſſage, and ſo I commit you.

Clau. To the tuition of God: from my houſe if I had it.

Pedro The ſixt of Iuly: your louing friend Benedicke.

Bened. Nay mocke not, mocke not, the body of your diſcourſe is ſometime guarded with fragments, and the guardes are but ſlightly baſted on neither, ere you flowt old ends any further, examine your conſcience, and ſo I leaue you. *exit*